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**American Board  
of Medical Specialties**  
*Higher standards. Better care.®*

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## What is ABMS Board Certification?

ABMS — Aiming Higher — Making...



ABMS and the [ABMS Member Boards](#) focus on improving the health of individuals, their families, and communities by elevating the discipline of specialty medicine through board certification.

ABMS Member Board certification offers an independent evaluation and verification of physicians' skills and expertise. It supports and encourages physicians in developing their knowledge and skills throughout their careers to meet the professional practice requirements set by their peers.

As medical specialties continue to evolve, so does board certification. In this way, it supports specialists in developing their knowledge and skills while it remains the trusted credential patients rely on to help identify qualified specialists.

## How Does a Physician Become Board Certified?

To become certified, specialists complete residency training following medical school, meet all [training requirements](#), and successfully complete the board examination process. Achieving board certification is the threshold of a specialist's lifelong commitment to demonstrating professionalism and continuous learning, toward the ultimate goal of providing quality patient care.

## How Does Board Certification Contribute to Health Care?

Board certified specialists, also known as diplomates, bring the standards of specialty care to their patients and the hospitals and health systems where they work. Board certification assures patients and health care organizations that the specialists

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EXHIBIT

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they choose are skilled and knowledgeable, maintain their specialty expertise, and meet the standards established by their peers.

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Neurology	4,320	Pathology	31,336
Thoracic Surgery	5,741	Emergency Medicine	38,596
	5,898	Percept	42,499
Neurological Surgery	6,413	Obstetrics and Gynecology	52,330
Plastic Surgery	8,348	Oncology	56,347
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	11,688	Radiology	68,499
Preventive Medicine	12,704	Psychiatry and Neuroscience	73,554
Geriatrics	13,099	Family Medicine	92,919
Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery	14,908	Pediatrics	108,447
Urology	15,590	Internal Medicine	144,172

Go to [ABMS.org](#) for more information

**Learn more at [ABMS.org](#).**

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**BOARD CERTIFICATION**  
**AIMING HIGHER**

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) 24 Member Boards certify more than **920,000** physicians across 40 specialties and 57 subspecialties.

ABMS board certified physicians are:

- ✓ Skilled and knowledgeable
- ✓ Experts in their specialty
- ✓ Meeting a higher standard

ABMS Member Boards adhere to rigorous writing and assessment standards for medical specialty certification, giving patients peace of mind that their ABMS board certified physician is an expert in his/her specialty.

**WHEN TALKING ABOUT BOARD CERTIFICATION, PEOPLE SAY!...**

- 82%** Trust board certification is a important factor when choosing a physician.
- 95%** Report their physicians are participating in ongoing treatment and education programs.
- 98%** Report their physicians to see or talk with the latest medical advances.

**EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT BOARD CERTIFICATION IS ASSOCIATED WITH...**

- Higher Quality of Care**  
Hospitals with more board certified emergency department physicians provide a consistently higher quality of care to their patients according to their studies. Physicians who participated in or already presented on educational programs upon their board certification achieved a superior patient performance in managing COVID-19 cases.
- Always Learning**  
76% percent of board-certified family physicians who completed board certification study improvement activity, and they would change patient care to a result of what they learned.
- Lower Costs**  
Patients need less time to wait for necessary care. Studies indicate that board certified physicians are more likely to participate in programs to reduce their time of certification.
- Less Malpractice**  
Board certified orthopedists suggest less time spent on malpractice than their non-board certified counterparts.

Source:  
1. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
2. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
3. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
4. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
5. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
6. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
7. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
8. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
9. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.  
10. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in 2017.

Learn more at [ABMS.org](#).

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Learn additional facts about [board certification](#) and its importance in providing a [higher standard of patient care](#).

## What is Continuing Certification?

Continuing certification is the ongoing process of board certification that simultaneously supports physicians in keeping their knowledge and skills current while validating their increasing expertise in a specialty.

The ABMS Member Board certification programs include continuous assessment and learning activities for professional development.

The characteristics of continuing certification continue to evolve over time to keep pace with medical advancements and how care is delivered. The ABMS Member Boards are working to provide their diplomates more focused, relevant, and meaningful assessments for [identifying gaps and supporting learning](#).

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## Benefits of Continuing Certification Include:

<b>Helps physicians stay current with medical advancements</b>	+
<b>Emphasizes assessment to enhance learning</b>	+
<b>Provides direction to identify knowledge gaps and refocus learning</b>	+
<b>Fulfills public expectations for physician professionalism</b>	+
<b>Reduces risk of disciplinary actions</b>	+
<b>Encourages participation in professional and organizational quality improvement activities</b>	+

ABMS offers ways for the public and professional organizations to [find out if a physician is board certified](#) and is keeping their knowledge and skills current through continuing certification activities.

## What Enhancements Are Being Made to Continuing Certification?

ABMS and its Member Boards design programs that encourage continuing professional development, health care research, and practice improvement necessary for advancing the quality and delivery of patient care. They continuously collaborate with residents, diplomates, hospitals, and professional and specialty societies to explore ways to further support physician professional development and promote learning.

Using all this input, and with consideration of ways to foster, cultivate, and preserve a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the boards are enhancing continuing certification by:

- Enabling better and more frequent assessments that offer convenience while maintaining a rigorous evaluation of physician knowledge;
- Using the formative aspects of assessment to inform the summative decision on a physician's certification status;
- Bringing assessment and other program activities to where physicians practice;
- Offering remediation pathways to retain or regain a certificate;
- Enhancing consistency, transparency, and accountability; and
- Reviewing certification standards.

ABMS is aiming higher by continually evolving board certification through innovative programs and services that help physicians demonstrate their competence and professionalism, support organizations in achieving their quality improvement and safety goals, and offer assurance to the public that they are being cared for by specialists committed to their health and well-being.

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#### PUBLICATIONS

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[ABMS Insights Newsletter](#)

[ABMS Guide to Medical Specialties \(annual\)](#)

[ABMS Board Certification Report \(annual\)](#)



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